Kamsa Sends Akrura for Krsna

from the Krsna Book Chapter 36 by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and the Sri Brahma-Vaivarta Purana
translated by Kusakrata dasa and adapted by Radha Damodar dasa

Narrator: One night the evil King Kamsa saw a nightmare. Frightened, agitated and dejected, he could not even eat. Assembling his sons, relatives, friends and priests, unhappy Kamsa spoke.

Kamsa: In the middle of the night, I saw a fearful nightmare! O friends and priests, O wise ones, please hear what I saw:

In red garments and a red-flower garland, anointed with red sandal a gruesome, emaciated woman wildly laughed and danced with many associates in my palace!
She clutched a sharp sword and a fearful human skull and her tongue moved to and fro!
A gigantic sudra widow with black garments, a broken nose and disheveled hair tried to embrace me!
A gruesome red-haired woman in dirty rags put tilak marks on my forehead and chest!
O Satyaka, again and again she threw over-ripe black tala fruits, smashing them with a great sound!
A deformed, ragged, red-haired mleccha decorated me with broken shells!
Accompanied by husband and sons, a splendid, saintly woman angrily broke clay pots again and again and cursed me!
Intoning curses, an angry brahmana gave me a garland anointed with red sandal!
One moment there was a shower of burning cinders, another moment a shower of ashes and another moment a shower of blood inside my palace!
I saw many deformed apes, crows, dogs, bears, boars and mules - all screaming terribly!
At sunrise, I saw piles of coals and dry firewood. I saw a troop of monkeys and many broken claws!
Dressed in yellow garments, jewels a jasmine-garland and red sindura dots - filled with anger, a saintly woman cursed me and left my palace!
I saw many fearful, cruel men, with ropes in their hands, enter my palace. In every room I saw horribly deformed, disheveled women dancing naked!
I saw the sun and moon eclipsed simultaneously! I saw many meteors, comets, earthquakes and thunderstorms. I saw many kingdoms

destroyed and a host of calamities. I saw a great cyclone uprooting trees and mountains and dashing them to the ground! I saw every house burned to cinders with screams of "Alas! Alas!" everywhere!

Narrator: After speaking these words in the assembly, Kamsa stopped and became silent. Hearing of this dream, Kamsa's friends bowed their heads and sighed.

Thinking that his disciple's death was now imminent, the priest Satyaka fell unconscious.

Believing that the time of Kamsa's death had suddenly come, Kamsa's father, mother, and wives wept with grief.

After some thought, the intelligent priest Satyaka, who was a disciple of Sukracaharya, gave the following advice to the distraught Kamsa.

Satyaka: O king, give up your fears. Why should you fear while I am present? You should offer a grand sacrifice to Lord Siva.

The yajna named Dhanur-yajna (the Sacrifice of the Bow), where abundant food and charity are distributed, ends all nightmares and destroys the fears brought by enemies, the elements or one's own self. At the conclusion of this Sacrifice, Lord Siva will appear. He will give all good fortune. He will give a boon that removes old age and death!

In the past, powerful warriors such as Banasura, Nandi, Parasurama and Bhalla, the best of the strong, performed this yajna. Here is the history of that ceremony - Lord Siva gave a giant bow to Nandisvara. Saintly Nandisvara worshipped the bow, became perfect and gave the bow to Banasura. Banasura performed the yajna, became perfect and, at Puskara-tirtha, gave the bow to Parasurama. Parasurama, who is an ocean of mercy, kindly gave that bow to you.

O king, that very strong bow is a thousand hands long and ten hands thick. It was built according to Lord S\va's design. The demigod Brahma resides at the root of this bow. Lord Narayana resides in its middle and Lord Siva resides in its tip. The bow is bent in three places. It is studded with six kinds of jewels. Its splendor eclipses the summer midday sun.

When placed in this bow, the pasupata arrow becomes invincible. Nothing can withstand it. Only Lord Narayana can counteract it.

In this yajna, you should worship both Lord Siva and his bow. You should invite all important personalities and perform this ceremony at once.

But, O king, if the bow is broken during the yajna, then the performer of the sacrifice will die. Of this there is no doubt.

O king, even powerful Lord Sesa, Surya and Karttikeya cannot bend this bow. What then can be said of others?

It was with this bow that Lord Siva happily killed the demon Trpura. Therefore, in a great festival, and without any fear, you should perform this auspicious yajna of the bow.

Kamsa: My friends, I know that the person who desires to kill both me and my family was born in Vasudeva's family and taken somehow to Nanda Maharaja's home, where He has prospered for some twelve years and has been lucky in eluding death from my demon friends.

Although only a boy, He is very powerful. When only a baby, He killed our dear Putana and since then He has killed a great many of my wise and heroic relatives and counselors. At age eight, He held Govardhana Hill aloft with one hand to shelter the inhabitants of Vrndavana and thus embarrassed mighty King Indra.

He happily expanded into the forms of many boys and calves, thwarting the play of Creator Brahma.

Now this tricky child stands in the way of my plan for world domination. On this Earth, I have no enemy greater than Him. Even in Svarga, Patala and the three worlds, there is no enemy to challenge me. When I kill Nanda's son, I will become the emperor of the seven continents. First, I will defeat my ancestor, sickly Candra. Next, I will defeat Vayu, Kuvera, Varuna and even Yama, the god of Death! Brahma and Siva present no threat because they have taken to asceticism. And Vishnu stands impartial and see everyone equally. Indeed, it is said that Vishnu resides in everyone's heart!

(points) Here are my best wrestlers and elephant keepers. They should listen carefully to my plan:
My dear heroic wrestlers Canura and Mustika, please hear this - Balarama and Krsna, the sons of Vasudeva, are living in Nanda's cowherd village. It has been predicted that these two boys will be the cause of my death. When they are brought here, kill Them on the pretext of engaging them in a wrestling match.(They bow, assenting.)

Erect a wrestling ring with many surrounding viewing stands, and bring all the residents of this city and the outlying districts to see the open competition.
You, elephant-keeper, my good man, should position the elephant Kuvalyapida at the entrance to the wresting arena and have him kill my two enemies before the festival even begins!

Commence the bow sacrifice festival on the Caturdasi day in accordance with the relevant Vedic injunctions. In ritual slaughter, offer the appropriate kinds of animals to the magnanimous Lord Siva.

So, let's get on with it! Some of you warriors should go to Vrndavana immediately and bring me Nanda's son, Krsna, along with his elder brother, Balarama!

Satyaka: Wait, O king! In order to bring Krsna unawares to Mathura, you should send one of the elders of the court such as Vasudeva, Uddhava or Akrura to Nanda's village to invite Krsna and Balarama to attend your great festival. Krsna will not think to question them of your intentions.

Kamsa: Ah! Very good, Satyaka. Well, here is Vasudeva! (to Vasudeva) Vasudeva, you are learned in the books of morality, politics and other pleasantries - you go to Nanda's village and fetch them!

Vasudeva: O king of kings, it is not right for me to go to Nanda's village and invite his son to come here. If I bring Krsna, He will fight with you. I do not think it is good that He and you fight.
Everyone will say, " Krsna died because His father brought Him here." Or they will say, "Vasudeva had his own son kill the king."

Of You two, one must die. Many heroic warriors will also die. No battle fails to bring harm. (Kamsa eyes blaze with anger. He grabs a sword and attacks Vasudeva. Powerful Ugrasena stops his son, Kamsa. Vasudeva, filled with anger, leaves the assembly.Ugrasena also leaves. Kamsa composes himself.)

Kamsa: Well then - Akrura, you are Krsna's maternal uncle and have always been faithful to me. (taking Akrura's hand) My dear Akrura, most charitable one, please do me a friendly favor out of respect. Among the Bhojas and Vrsnis, there is no one else as kind to us as you. Please go to Nanda's village, where the two sons of Vasudeva are living and, without delay, bring Them here upon my chariot.

The demigods, who are under the protection of Visnu, have sent these two boys as my death. Go quickly to Nanda's village and bring

Krsna and Balarama here. And also have Nanda and the other cowherd men come with gifts of tribute.

After you bring K and Balarama, I will have them killed by my elephant, Kuvalyapida (heavy foot) who is as powerful as death itself. And, if by chance They escape from him, I will have Them killed by my wrestlers, who are as strong as lightning.

When these Two have been killed, I will kill Vasudeva and all Their relatives - the Vrsnis, Bhojas and Dasarhas! I will also kill my old father, Ugrasena, who is greedy for my kingdom, and I will kill his brother Devaka and all my other enemies as well. Then, my friend, this earth will be free of thorns. Haha!

My elder relative Jarasandha amd my dear friend Dvivda are solid well-wishers of mine, as are Sambara, Naraka, and Bana. I will use them all to kill off those kings who are allied with the demigods, and then I will rule the earth!

Now that you understand my intentions, please go at once and bring K and Balarama to watch the bow sacrifice and see the opulence of the Yadu's capital.

Akrura: O King, you have expertly devised a process to free yourself of misfortune. Still, one should be equal in success and failure, since it is certainly destiny that produces the results of one's work. An ordinary person is determined to act on his desires even when fate prevents their fulfillment. Yet even though your plan is not fit to execute, I will carry it out since you are the King and I am your subject.

Kamsa: That's right. Thank you. (Akrura nods his respects and leaves the assembly.)

Kamsa: You others get busy making arrangements for the grand festival. Invite all the important personalities such as Angira, Durvasa, Brghu, Marici, Daksa, Cyavana, Valmiki, Parasurama and Sanat Kumar as well as many brahmanas and asthetics with their disciples and sons. Also invite all of the kings and great heroes such as Jarasandha, Dhrtarastra, Drona, Duryodhana, Krpacharya Sisupala, Salya, Dantavakra, Salva Dambhika, the king of Dravida-desa. (Everyone leaves. Kamsa is the last to leave. Loud Festival music plays.)